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SUBJECT: GETTING TO KNOW YOU: NANJING OFFICIALS WARM TO CONSULATE  
OUTREACH

REF: A. a) SHANGHAI 27 (Jinagsu People's Congress Opening)  
1B. b) 09 SHANGHAI 477 (Ambassador's Jiangsu Trip)  
1C. c) 09 SHANGHAI 421 (New York Legislature Event)  
1D. d) 09 SHANGHAI 320 (Independence Day Reception)  
1E. (U) This message is sensitive but unclassified. Not for distribution outside USG channels.

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1. (SBU) Summary: Jiangsu provincial officials who were initially suspicious of Consulate General efforts to implement an "American Presence Officer" program in Nanjing a little over a year ago are now keen on more contact with the Consulate. Neighbor provinces Anhui and Zhejiang, watching the increased Consulate focus on Jiangsu, are showing a new-found eagerness to benefit from similar outreach. End summary.

2. (SBU) Consulate General Shanghai's dedicated provincial outreach efforts began in October 2008 with the arrival of the Consulate's first American Presence Officer for Nanjing. (Note: The Department's original plan to place a U.S. diplomat in Nanjing was rejected by the Chinese Government. The Nanjing APP officer therefore covers the region from Shanghai. End note.) The first task was to build contacts in Nanjing and convince the Jiangsu provincial government that the assignment of a Consulate officer dedicated to Nanjing affairs was a boost to relations rather than somehow threatening.

3. (SBU) At the outset, the Jiangsu Foreign Affairs Office (FAO) treated the new outreach officer with wariness. Initial meetings in late 2008 regularly included a standard reminder from the Chinese side that any permanent USG presence in Nanjing would require an agreement between the United States and China's Central Government. The Jiangsu FAO also protested in writing the use of the title "designated officer for Nanjing" in official correspondence as being incompatible with the bilateral consular agreement, even though that same title was used by Mission staff assigned to comparable positions in other parts of China without objection by the relevant local authorities.

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From Plum Blossoms to Independence Day  
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4. (SBU) As our outreach officer continued to plug away at establishing relationships, nervous officials started to warm up. Near-weekly travel to Nanjing and a willingness to accept all invitations, even the Plum Blossom Festival, helped convince suspicious officialdom that they had a lot to gain from Consulate attention.

5. (SBU) Consulate General Shanghai's July 2009 Independence Day reception in Nanjing saw a notable change in the official attitude toward our outreach efforts (Ref D). The event marked the first time since the founding of the People's Republic of China that the USG had hosted an Independence Day reception in Nanjing. The Jiangsu Provincial FAO showed clear apprehension

in our initial discussions, suggesting in a mid-June meeting that no official above the provincial government secretariat level would likely attend the reception. On the day of the event, therefore, we were surprised to learn we could expect high-level and extensive representation by the provincial leadership. Arriving 30 minutes before the start of the event and staying well after the ceremonial opening to work the crowd, Jiangsu's vice governor in charge of foreign affairs led the official delegation, accompanied by a Nanjing vice mayor and representatives of the provincial People's Congress and the provincial People's Political Consultative Conference. Following the event, the Consulate received very positive feedback from attendees who said they appreciated the focus on Nanjing and Jiangsu and asked when the Consulate would host another such reception.

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Tending the Relationship  
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16. (SBU) Regular tending of the relationship has continued to yield results. Post participation in an October celebration of

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the twentieth anniversary of the Jiangsu-New York sister state relationship led to interaction with high-level officials, including Jiangsu Communist Party Secretary Liang Baohua and Provincial People's Congress Foreign Affairs Committee member Zhou Wei (Ref C). These connections proved instrumental in gaining requested meetings during Ambassador Huntsman's December trip as well as in Consulate attendance at the Jiangsu Provincial People's Congress opening session in January 2010.

17. (SBU) Ambassador Huntsman's travel to Nanjing, Yangzhou and Suzhou in December 2009 (Ref B) offered a timely opportunity to introduce our new outreach officer to the leadership. Stressing this officer's role as our dedicated point of contact for Nanjing, Ambassador Huntsman reiterated the benefits to the Chinese officials of having a central contact at the Consulate for their questions, visits, and programs.

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What a Difference a Year Makes  
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18. (SBU) The Consulate's request to send observers to the annual Jiangsu Provincial People's Congress was approved in 2010 after being refused in 2009, another testimony to the contacts formed and relationships built over the course of the year. As a result, our Deputy Principal Officer (DPO) and four other Consulate reps attended the Jiangsu Provincial People's Congress opening session January 25-26 (Ref A). Media coverage of their presence reached national levels and caught the interest of officials in neighboring Zhejiang province, who told the DPO they had seen press reports about his attendance. When he suggested that Zhejiang might invite Consulate representatives to its Provincial People's Congress annual session in 2011, the officials seemed receptive.

19. (SBU) Comment: A little over one year into our enhanced provincial outreach effort, Consulate General Shanghai has seen considerable pay-off in the form of increased access. Even though the Consulate has engaged in extensive public affairs, political, economic, consular, and trade provincial outreach for many years, having an officer dedicated specifically to this effort has yielded tangible results and given us a new tool for launching effective, targeted outreach aimed at the provincial and sub-provincial jurisdictions outside Shanghai.

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